

Anti-Communist Cherne

New CIA Overseer Long a Vietnam Hawk

By Norman Kempster
Washington Star Staff Writer

Leo Cherne, named by President Ford to a new three-member board to supervise intelligence agencies, was one of the earliest supporters of U.S. Vietnam policy and has long been an outspoken opponent of Communism.

An economist by profession, Cherne is executive director of the Research Institute of America. In addition, he was a longtime chairman of the board of directors of the International Rescue Committee, a group which has aided refugees, especially those who were escaping from Communist countries.

The International Rescue Committee in the 1960s received some of its funds from the J.M. Kaplan Fund, a foundation identified in 1967 as a conduit for money from the CIA to other organizations. The committee apparently also received money from sources which have no connections with the CIA.

CHERNE WAS a member of the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board during the Nixon administration. Other members included Vice President Nelson Rockefeller and former Treasury Secretary John Connally.

The new board, which Ford created yesterday by an executive order, replaces the Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board which has been called ineffective by its critics.

Cherne first gained notice at the White House in 1938 when he wrote a book advising businessmen on how to adjust to the war in

Europe which would engulf the United States three years later. Former President Franklin D. Roosevelt rebuked his secretary of war for writing a preface to the book which the President did not approve.

Twenty years later, in 1959, Cherne testified before the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee on behalf of legislation creating a "freedom academy" to teach Americans about Communism.

IN THAT testimony, Cherne chided the Rev. Billy Graham — an outspoken anti-Communist himself — for having praised the Russians for "high morality."

Cherne said, "A short, sophisticated course in the complex realities of life in the Soviet Union, such as this (to be provided by the proposed academy) would have aided the Rev. Billy Graham to discern the sin against humanity which lies astride the Russian people."

Cherne was a member of several groups supporting U.S. policy in Vietnam. He also wrote an article praising former Vietnamese President Ngo Dinh Diem.

During the 1972 election campaign, Cherne was vice chairman under Chairman John Connally of Democrats for Nixon. In that role he wrote a letter accusing Democratic nominee George S. McGovern of "isolationism." The letter was mailed using a "non-political" State Department mailing list, an action which the Nixon campaign later admitted was improper.

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Norman

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Reorg.

P-Cherne, Leo

CIA 4.01 J.M. Kaplan
Fund

~~Original~~ INTERNATIONAL
Rescue Committee